R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 016 657 24 TE 000 252

AN EVALUATION OF ORAL INTERPRETATION AS A PART OF THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH. INTERIM REPORT.

BY- FERNANDEZ, THOMAS L.
MONMOUTH COLL., ILL.

REPORT NUMBER CRP-HE-145 PUB DATE JUN 67
ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CTR., URBANA
REPORT NUMBER ISCPET-SS-11-26-67
CONTRACT OEC-5-10-029
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.60 13P.

DESCRIPTORS- *TEACHER EDUCATION, *ENGLISH INSTRUCTION, *INTERPRETIVE READING, *ORAL EXPRESSION, *ORAL READING, COLLEGE TEACHERS, ENGLISH, ORAL ENGLISH, PRESERVICE EDUCATION, PROGRAM EVALUATION, SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, SPEECH, SPEECH SKILLS, TEACHER ATTITUDES, TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM, TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS, ISCPET

THIS STUDY WAS DESIGNED TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER OR NOT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS IN ORAL INTERPRETATION IS A VALID OBJECTIVE IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH. THE QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH SERVED AS THE BASIC INSTRUMENT OF THE STUDY SOLICITED RESPONSES FROM COLLEGE PROFESSORS OF SPEECH AND OF ENGLISH AND FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH. RESULTS OF THE STUDY INDICATED THAT ORAL EXPRESSION IS A SUBJECT OF INTEREST AND CONCERN TO THOSE ENGAGED IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL. THIS GROUP OF TEACHERS SUPPORTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS IN ORAL INTERPRETATION AS AN OBJECTIVE OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS. MOREOVER, SKILL IN READING ALOUD WAS DEEMED A HELPFUL TOOL FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS BY THE MAJORITY OF THE RESPONDENTS TO THE SURVEY, REGARDLESS OF THE RESPONDNT'S SUBJECT FIELD AND THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AT WHICH HE TAUGHT. (A COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE UTILIZED IN THE SURVEY IS ATTACHED TO THE REPORT.) (AUTHOR/RD)

No BR no
PA 24

ED016657

INTERIM REPORT

USOE PROJECT NUMBER HE-145

USOE CONTRACT NUMBER OE-5-10-029

ISCPET SUBCONTRACT NUMBER SS-11-26-67

ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS (ISCPET)

AN EVALUATION OF ORAL INTERPRETATION AS A PART OF THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

JUNE 1967

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
Bureau of Research

TE 000 252

ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER
IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY
SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS (ISCPET)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

AN EVALUATION OF ORAL INTERPRETATION AS A PART OF THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

THOMAS L. FERNANDEZ

JUNE 1967

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and to a subcontract with the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. Contractors and subcontractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of projects. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent Office of Education position or policy.

MONMOUTH COLLEGE

MONMOUTH, ILLINOIS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background 1

B. Hypothesis 2

C. Purpose and Objectives 2

Part II. METHOD 2

Part III. RESULTS. 3

Figure 1, College Professors of English. . . 3

Figure 2, College Professors of Speech . . . 4

Figure 3, Secondary Teachers of English. . . 4

Figure 4, Confidence Interval. 4

Part IV. DISCUSSION 5

Part V. CONCLUSIONS. 7

Part VI. SUMMARY. 7

Appendix A. 8

Appendix B (References) 10

I. *INTRODUCTION*

A. Background

In 1965, the November issue of *College English* contained a preliminary statement on qualifications for secondary teachers of English as established by the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers (ISCPET). This statement established five major areas in which preparation was deemed essential. Standards for minimal, good, and superior abilities were established in the areas of knowledge of language, written composition, literature, knowledge and skill in oral communication, and skill in the teaching of English. The focus of this study is on item 4, knowledge and skill in oral communication. Specific attention is given to the assertion that the competently trained and qualified secondary school teacher of English must be skilled in reading aloud.

It may be conceded that there are minimal standards of pronunciation, enunciation, and diction that a professional secondary teacher of English should be expected to meet inasmuch as the speech habits of the classroom teacher undoubtedly will influence the habits of the student. The imitative aspects of speech learning have long been acknowledged. The ISCPET criteria for professionally qualified secondary school teachers of English, however, emphasize that not only should this teacher have good basic speech habits, but also that this teacher should have the ability to read aloud effectively. The "good" teacher is characterized as having, "an ability to read aloud well enough to convey most aspects of the interpretive art - meaning, mood, dominant emotions, varying emotions, overtones, and variety." The "superior" teacher is expected to manifest "touches of expertise and showmanship of the professional oral interpreter or actor."

The ISCPET references to teacher skills in oral interpretation are based upon the assumption that students are often introduced to literature through oral presentation, and that the English teacher who is ill-equipped to present material orally may stifle or delay a student's appreciation of literary art. John Crowe Ransom supported these assumptions in *The World's Body* (Scribners, 1938), when he observed: "Some of the best work now being done in [English] departments is by men who do little more than read aloud well, enforcing a private act of appreciation upon the students." In *Critical Approaches to Literature* (Prentice-Hall, 1956), David Daiches concluded, "There are some who can be brought to enter into the rich vitality of a work more effectively by having it read aloud slowly, with proper phrasing and emphasis than by the most careful analysis of its structure." Additional evidences of the efficacy of the oral approach to the study of literature may be discovered in the doctoral studies of Sister Wulftange (Ohio State University, 1963), J. Paul Marcoux (Northwestern, 1965), and Donald Salper (University of Minnesota, 1965).

B. Hypothesis

The development of skills in oral interpretation is an essential part of the preparation of the secondary teacher of English.

C. Purpose and Objectives

The study was designed in order to ascertain whether or not "an ability to read aloud well enough to convey most aspects of the interpretive art - meaning, mood, dominant emotions, varying emotions, overtones, and variety," as stated in the ISCPET criteria is in fact a valid objective in the preparation of secondary teachers of English. The basic question to be answered is whether or not the practicing secondary teacher of English believes that the ability to read aloud well should be an objective of his professional preparation. Moreover, the study design was intended to discover if those teachers who have had preparation in oral interpretation find that preparation to be an asset, and if those teachers who have not been so prepared find the absence of that preparation to be a liability. Finally, the study attempted to discern how the attitudes toward oral interpretation of those engaged in teaching English at the secondary level compared with the attitudes of those responsible for planning and supervising preparatory programs for secondary teachers at the college and university level.

In addition to the primary objectives, it was anticipated that information might be compiled revealing how often secondary teachers of English read aloud to their classes, and how the attitudes of secondary teachers of English toward the definition and objectives of oral interpretation compare with college professors of English and speech.

II. METHOD

A questionnaire was designed to serve as the basic instrument. The procedure included the preparation of sample survey items which were distributed to a group of secondary English teachers, college English professors, and college speech professors for evaluation. The pre-test group was asked to respond to the clarity and validity of each survey item. Suggestions for change were noted and incorporated into a final revision of the survey instrument.

The final version of the survey instrument contained eleven items. Secondary teachers of English were asked to respond to all eleven items. Eight items were submitted to college English professors, and seven to college speech professors.

A copy of the eleven survey items is attached as appendix A. Items F, G-1, and G-2 were omitted from the questionnaire sent to college professors of English. In order to provide for comparison of responses, the statement of item A for college English professors was changed to read: "Teachers of English should read aloud to a class . . ." Items A, F, G-1, and G-2 were deleted from the questionnaire submitted to college speech professors.

III. *RESULTS*

Survey instruments were distributed on the basis of a random selection. Respondents were chosen from the Directory Supplement of Illinois Secondary Teachers for 1967, the Directory of the Speech Association of America, and catalogs for the several colleges and universities in the state of Illinois. Five hundred (500) questionnaires were distributed to secondary teachers of English in the state of Illinois, with three hundred and five (305) reporting. Two hundred questionnaires went to college English Professors, with ninety-six reporting. Two hundred questionnaires were sent to college speech professors, with one hundred and thirty (130) reporting.

Respondents were instructed to examine the statement of each survey item, and to mark a point on the scaled continuum corresponding with their attitude or experience. The response continuum was scaled from 0 through 10. Sample means ($\bar{X}$), variance (s^2) and sample standard deviations (s) were computed as shown in figures 1, 2, and 3. A 95% confidence interval for the population mean was computed for the responses of secondary school teachers of English as shown in figure 4.

Figure 1

COLLEGE PROFESSORS OF ENGLISH

Item	ΣXi	n	$\bar{X}$	s^2	s
A	539.0	88	6.1	1.77	1.3
B	703.4	96	7.3	3.72	1.9
C	701.4	96	7.3	3.51	1.9
D	736.7	94	7.8	3.13	1.8
E	734.0	94	7.8	4.38	2.1
H	430.7	96	4.5	4.62	2.2
I	743.0	94	7.9	4.36	2.1
J	777.9	94	8.3	2.12	1.5

Figure 2

COLLEGE PROFESSORS OF SPEECH

Item	ΣX_i	n	$\bar{X}$	s^2	s
B	1058.6	129	8.2	2.43	1.6
C	1072.2	130	8.3	2.16	1.5
D	1104.4	130	8.5	1.70	1.3
E	1081.0	126	8.6	2.50	1.6
H	766.4	130	5.9	1.61	1.3
I	1166.9	129	9.1	1.34	1.2
J	1204.4	130	9.3	0.41	0.6

Figure 3

SECONDARY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Item	ΣX_i	n	$\bar{X}$	s^2	s
A	1891.4	302	6.3	3.24	1.8
B	2451.4	305	8.0	2.44	1.6
C	2367.6	305	7.8	3.34	1.8
D	2506.3	302	8.3	1.49	1.2
E	2435.7	301	8.1	3.89	2.0
F	1608.9	304	5.3	7.82	2.8
G-1	1680.8	207	8.1	4.34	2.1
G-2	884.2	135	6.6	1.82	1.4
H	1815.4	304	6.0	.74	.9
I	2554.4	305	8.4	1.86	1.4
J	2626.0	304	8.6	2.45	1.6

Figure 4

SECONDARY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Item	95% Confidence Interval: Mean $\mu(\bar{x})$	$\sigma_{\bar{x}}$	Confidence Interval
A	6.3	.10	6.1 - 6.5
B	8.0	.09	7.8 - 8.2
C	7.8	.10	7.6 - 8.0
D	8.3	.09	8.1 - 8.5
E	8.1	.12	7.9 - 8.3
F	5.3	.16	5.0 - 5.6
G-1	8.1	.15	7.8 - 8.4
G-2	6.6	.12	6.4 - 6.8
H	6.0	.05	5.9 - 6.1
I	8.4	.08	8.2 - 8.6
J	8.6	.10	8.4 - 8.8

IV. *DISCUSSION*

With fifty-nine percent (59%) of the total survey group responding, the subject of the survey would seem to be a sensitive one with the sampled population. Secondary teachers of English and college professors of speech seemed most sensitive to the survey topic with sixty-one percent (61%) and sixty-five percent (65%) responding respectively. Additional evidence of subject sensitivity may be revealed by the rapidity with which secondary teachers of English responded to the survey. Five hundred (500) questionnaires were posted to secondary teachers of English on Monday, April 17, 1967, with a request for return within three weeks of the mailing date. By Thursday, April 20, 1967, two hundred (200) completed questionnaires had been returned to the survey office. This represented forty percent (40%) of the total mailing for this group, and over sixty percent (60%) of the ultimate total of responses for this group.

Responses to item A suggest that college professors of English in the state of Illinois, as represented by this sampling of the population, believe that teachers of English should read aloud to their classes almost every day. The survey indicates, moreover, that secondary school teachers of English are following this practice. Mean responses to this item were almost identical for each group. It may be concluded, therefore, that oral reading is a recommended and frequently used tool in teaching English at the secondary level.

All three groups, as evidenced by responses to item B, stress the importance of the ability to read aloud well in teaching English. This is reinforced by the mean responses of each group to item C which establishes the attitude that lack of skill in reading aloud is conceived as being a handicap in teaching English. Responses to items B and C would seem to support the ISCPET criteria which indicate that the professionally competent secondary teacher of English must possess skills in reading aloud.

Responses to items D and E may be interpreted as revealing some degree of agreement as to what the term oral interpretation means to the sample groups. The mean responses for each group would suggest agreement that the term oral interpretation relates to neither undramatic reading aloud, nor to acting. The term oral interpretation is apparently most often associated with the ability to control the instruments of expression to convey moods and emotions, to clarify meaning, and perhaps in this way to intensify the experience of the literature. Mean responses to items I and J reinforce this association of the term oral interpretation with the combining of certain aspects of literary criticism and analysis, with matters of voice and delivery. The low standard deviation on item J for the college speech professors would indicate that this group more uniformly identifies oral interpretation as combining aspects of literary analysis and criticism with matters of voice and delivery. Responses to items D, E, I and J would

tend to substantiate the ISCPET standards establishing that good and superior secondary teachers of English be skilled in the art of oral interpretation. Responses to these items may also suggest that the ISCPET criteri. should describe characteristics associated with good oral interpretation rather than acting.

Mean response to item F would seem to indicate that the average secondary teacher of English responding has had at least one formal course in oral interpretation as part of his preparation for teaching English. The standard deviation for this item, however, suggests that the responses are widely spread on the scale. It may be concluded, therefore, that while formal course work in oral interpretation is not uncommon, it is far from being a universal experience in the preparation of secondary teachers of English as represented by the sample group.

In item G-1, those secondary teachers of English who had had some formal preparation in oral interpretation were asked to evaluate that preparation in the actual practice of teaching English. The mean response indicates that undergraduate preparation in oral interpretation has proved helpful in teaching English. This inference is reinforced by the responses of those lacking preparation in oral interpretation who reflect in item G-2 that this lack has been a handicap in teaching English at the secondary level.

Finally, the responses of each group to item H suggest that an undergraduate curriculum designed to prepare secondary teachers of English should include at least one course in oral interpretation. It may be significant that the secondary teachers of English were particularly positive on this recommendation with a lower standard deviation and a higher mean than either of the other sample groups. It should be noted that the college professors of speech and the secondary teachers of English were consistently stronger and more unified in their responses to the survey items than were the college professors of English.

The results of this study would seem to substantiate the hypothesis that the development of skills in oral interpretation is an essential part of the preparation of secondary teachers of English.

Moreover, the computed confidence interval indicates that if sample after sample of the size N (approximately 300) were taken from secondary teachers of English in the state of Illinois, 95% of all these sample means could be expected to fall within the intervals indicated.

V. *CONCLUSIONS*

It may be concluded from the responses to the survey that oral interpretation is a subject of interest and concern to those who teach English at the secondary level, and that it is an instrument used almost daily in teaching. Moreover, the Illinois secondary school teacher of English, as represented by the sample group, supports the hypothesis that developing skills in reading aloud should be an objective of programs designed to prepare secondary teachers of English. The study reveals that preparation which develops skill in oral interpretation is considered to be an asset in teaching English and, concomitantly that the lack of preparation in oral interpretation is considered to pose some liability in teaching English effectively at the secondary level.

The survey results would seem to warrant further investigation into ways and means whereby the development of abilities in oral interpretation can be provided to those preparing to teach English at the secondary level.

VI. *SUMMARY*

This study was designed to ascertain whether or not the development of skills in oral interpreation is a valid objective in the preparation of secondary teachers of English. A questionnaire was designed to serve as the basic instrument of the study. Responses were solicited from college professors of speech and college professors of English, as well as from secondary teachers of English.

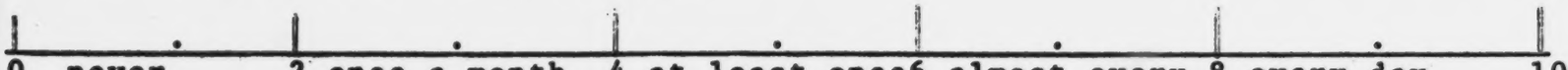
The results of the study indicate that oral interpretation is a subject of interest and concern to those engaged in teaching English at the secondary level. Moreover, the secondary teacher of English supports the development of skills in oral interpretation as an objective of programs designed to prepare secondary teachers of English. Skill in reading aloud is deemed a helpful tool in teaching English at the secondary level.

APPENDIX A

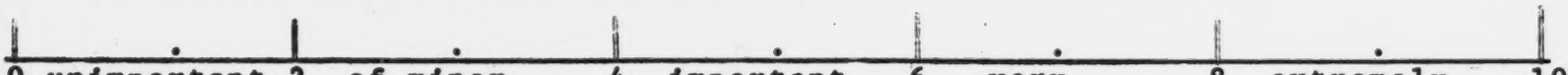
ISCPET ORAL INTERPRETATION SURVEY

Questionnaire Items

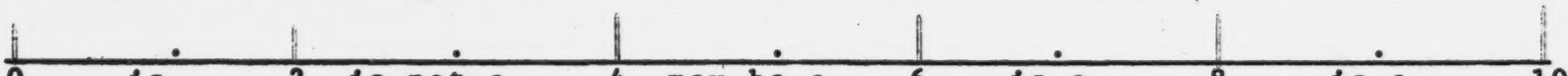
A. I read aloud to my classes:



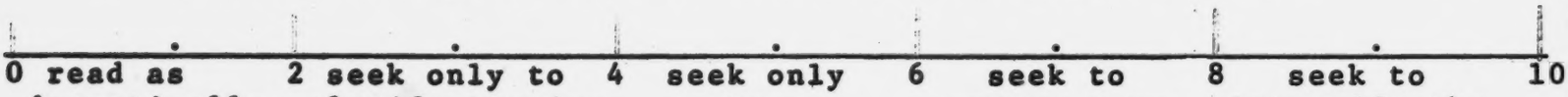
B. In teaching English, the ability to read aloud well is:



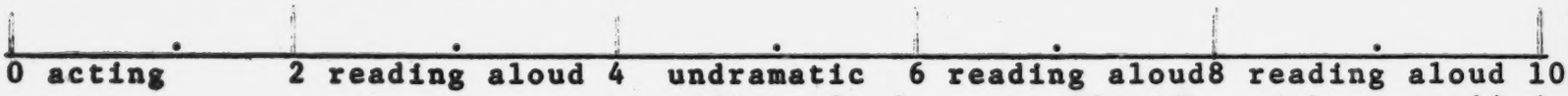
C. In teaching English, the lack of skill in reading aloud:


0 is definitely not a handicap
2 is not a significant handicap
4 may be a handicap
6 is a handicap
8 is a definite handicap
10

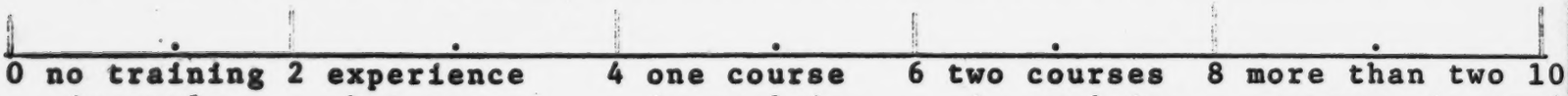
D. Teachers of English wo read aloud in the classroom should:


0 read as dramatically as possible
2 seek only to clarify meaning
4 seek only to identify the emotion appealed to
6 seek to convey meaning and mood as well as dominant emotions
8 seek to intensify the experience of the literature
10

E. The formal study of literature based upon the oral approach is commonly called oral interpreation. To me, the term oral interpretation is most suggestive of:



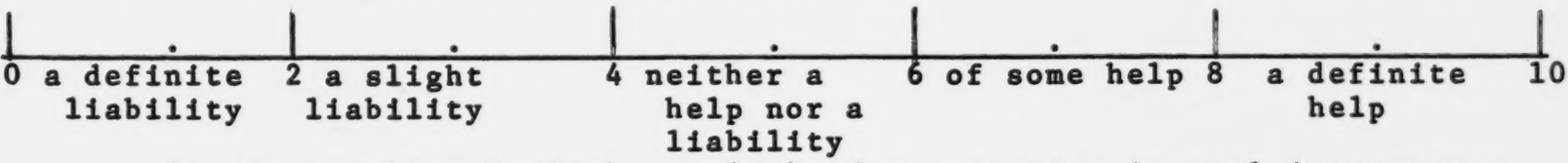
F. As part of my preparation for teaching English, I have had:


0 no training in oral interpretation
2 experience but no formal courses in oral interpretation
4 one course in oral interpretation
6 two courses in oral interpretation
8 more than two courses in oral interpretation
10

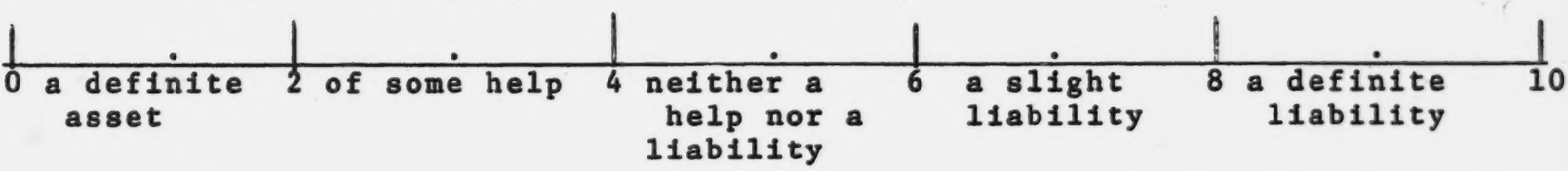
APPENDIX A (cont'd)

G. (answer part <u>one</u> or <u>two</u> as applicable)

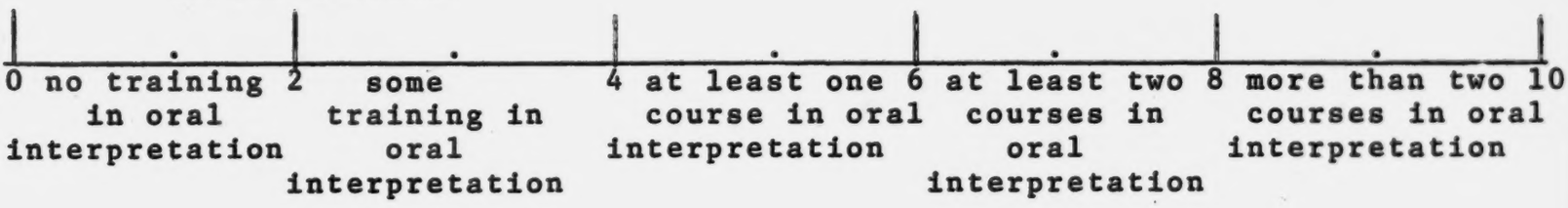
1. As preparation for teaching English, my undergraduate work in oral interpretation has been:



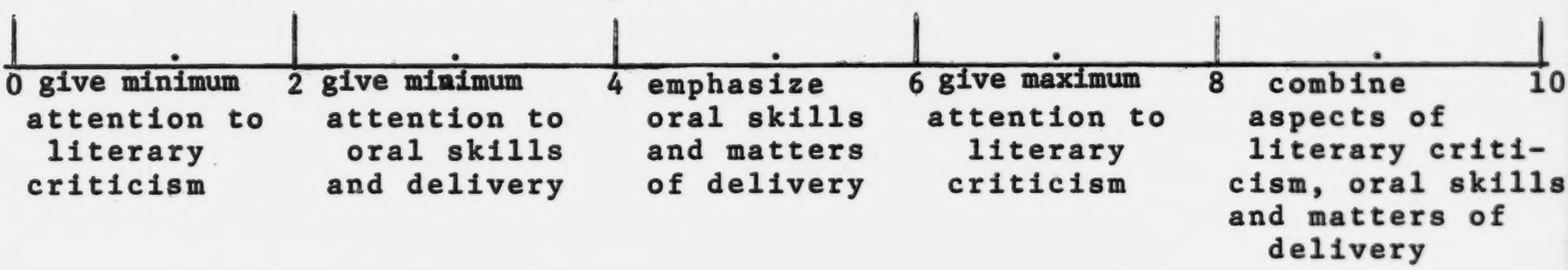
2. In teaching English, my <u>lack</u> of preparation in oral interpretation has been;



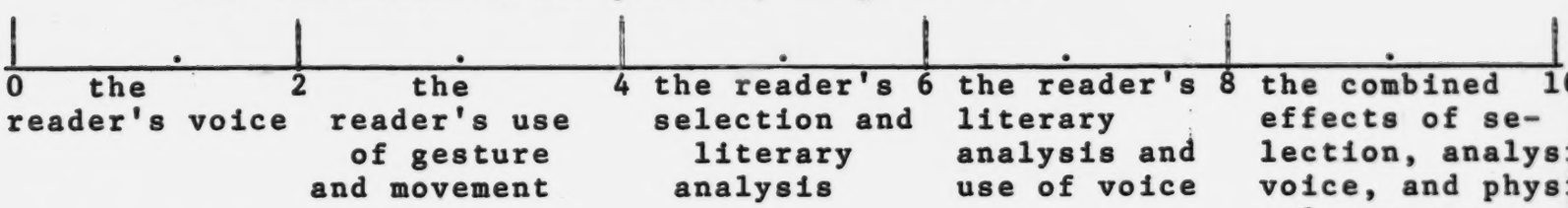
H. An undergraduate curriculum designed to prepare teachers of English should include:


0 no training in oral interpretation
2 some training in oral interpretation
4 at least one course in oral interpretation
6 at least two courses in oral interpretation
8 more than two courses in oral interpretation
10

I. A course in oral interpretation should:


0 give minimum attention to literary criticism
2 give minimum attention to oral skills and delivery
4 emphasize oral skills and matters of delivery
6 give maximum attention to literary criticism
8 combine aspects of literary criticism, oral skills and matters of delivery
10

J. In evaluating the effectiveness of oral reading in the classroom, most attention should probably be given to:


0 the reader's voice
2 the reader's use of gesture and movement
4 the reader's selection and literary analysis
6 the reader's literary analysis and use of voice
8 the combined effects of selection, analysis, voice, and physical response
10

APPENDIX B

Aggertt, Otis J., and Elbert, R. Bowen. *Communicative Reading.* 2nd Edition. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963.

Geiger, Don. *The Sound, Sense, and Performance of Literature.* Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963.

Jenkins, Jaunita R. (Supervisor). *Directory Supplement, Illinois Secondary Schools, 1966-67.* Printed by the state of Illinois through the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Lee, Charlotte I. *Oral Interpretation.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965.

McCollough, Celeste, and Locke Van Atta. *Statistical Concepts.* New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1963.

Parrish, Wayland M. *Reading Aloud.* New York: The Ronald Press, 1953.

Sloan, Thomas O. (Editor). *The Oral Study of Literature.* New York: Random House, 1966.

Work, William (Editor). *Directory: Speech Association of America, 1966-67.*